Keeping in Touch

News and notes from
the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.
5300 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 304, Los Angeles, CA 90029, (213) 464-5100.

Jan - Feb 1991

2,249 Attend Christmas Eve Services Held By MCC Toronto

Toronto's Gay and Lesbian Community celebrated the birth of their Saviour and made a political statement at Roy Thompson Hall, December 24, when 2,249 people attended church services held by the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, Ontario Canada.

People were asked by Senior Pastor, Rev. Brent Hawkes, to stand if they had lost a lover or friend to AIDS in the previous year. Over half the audience rose in silent memorial. Two Christmas trees were covered with snowflakes imprinted with the names of people who had died from AIDS and other diseases.

Rev. Hawkes said "I knew something wonderful was happening as soon as I said 'Welcome to the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto' and got a standing ovation. God was truly present in the hall and God's people were celebrating."

MCC held a traditional service of worship, including opening songs of praise, a processional, a proclamation of freedom and acceptance, and Holy Communion. All funds raised in the offering ($18,500) were donated to four organizations: PWA Foundation; Women's Counseling, Referral and Education Centre; 127 Isabella; and the AIDS Committee of Toronto.

A 43 member choir, featured singers, a handbell ensemble and classical orchestra under the musical direction of Rev. Danny Ray, stunned the audience with traditional and modern music, followed by an open communion to which all were invited. "I had never been able to take communion holding hands with my lover before. We cried and cried," one attendee said.

And next year? "We have already booked Roy Thompson Hall tentatively for two more years and we will try to raise the $25,000 cost per year ourselves," Rev. Hawkes said. "And after that, we may need a larger hall."

A Letter from The New UFMCC Field Director

(by Rev. Kittredge Cherry)

I am proud to be representing UFMCC as a full-time executive at the Fellowship headquarters in Los Angeles. I will be serving as Field Director of Ecumenical Witness and Ministry, Editor of Keeping In Touch, and Public Relations Associate. I invite readers of Keeping In Touch to share your dreams with me about UFMCC's role in the worldwide Christian church, and about how UFMCC publications can be improved to meet your needs more fully. I will be moving to Los Angeles in March. Please write or call me at the Fellowship Offices.

To this position I bring a strong background of experience and education. Last year I received a Master of Divinity degree from Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. I have served on the clergy staff of MCC-San Francisco since 1987, most recently as Program Director. Ecumenical relations have been an important part of my work in every ministry context. I worked as a journalist before my call to professional ministry. I am the author of Womansword: What Japanese Words Say About Women (1987) and Hide and Speak: How To Free Ourselves From Our Secrets, a book about coming out and spirituality that will be published by Harper Collins in July, 1991. I grew up in Iowa, where I met my spouse, Audrey Lockwood.

UFMCC is entering an era of ecumenical opportunity: In February I will join the UFMCC delegation to the World Council of Churches General Assembly in Australia, where we hope to provide the first sexuality workshop ever presented there. The National Council of Churches has agreed to new levels of dialogue about UFMCC's membership application. We, as lesbian and gay people and those who stand with us, have much to offer other denominations, and Jesus calls us to "speak the truth in love" to them.

I will be working closely with the other Fellowship staff and with our Chief Ecumencial Officer, Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson. I hope to involve many others in this important ministry. My dream is that our ecumenical efforts will enrich local MCC Churches as well as the global Christian community.

November, 1990
Top 20 Tithes

1.	MCC Dallas	Dallas, TX	$2514.93
2.	Church/Holy Spirit MCC	Ft Lauderdale, FL	2172.85
3.	MCC of the Resurrection	Houston, TX	1913.98
4.	Christ Alive MCC	Vancouver, BC, CAN	1908.84
5.	MCC San Francisco	San Francisco, CA	1530.40
6.	MCC Long Beach	Long Beach, CA	1221.92
7.	First MCC of Kansas	Wichita, KS	1056.00
8.	MCC of the Rockies	Denver, CO	1017.69
9.	River City MCC	Sacramento, CA	835.24
10.	Agape MCC	Ft. Worth, TX	741.67
11.	MCC Austin	Austin, TX	739.77
12.	MCC San Jose	San Jose, CA	735.40
13.	MCC Key West	Key West, FL	641.98
14.	Church of the Trinity MCC	Sarasota, FL	641.07
15.	Joy MCC	Orlando, FL	624.90
16.	Holy Covenant MCC	Hinsdale, IL	559.44
17.	MCC New York	New York, NY	514.51
18.	All Saints MCC	Atlanta, GA	506.20
19.	Christos MCC	Toronto, Ont., CAN	491.32
20.	MCC Topeka	Topeka, KS	483.99

November, 1990
Top 20 Per Capita

1.	Christ Alive MCC	Vancouver, BC, CAN	95.92
2.	MCC Ottawa ECM	Ottawa, Ont., CAN	95.08
3.	Calvary MCC	Redwood City, CA	41.07
4.	MCC Huntsville	Huntsville, AL	38.09
5.	MCC of Northern Virginia	Falls Church, VA	33.99
6.	New Covenant MCC	Walnut, CA	28.69
7.	MCC in the Country	Spring Valley, CA	28.65
8.	Alleluia MCC	Alberta, CAN	26.69
9.	MCC Winnipeg	Manitoba, CAN	25.44
10.	MCC Charlottesville	Charlottesville, VA	25.43
11.	MCC San Jose	San Jose, CA	24.43
12.	MCC Ocean of Life	Costa Mesa, CA	24.38
13.	MCC Dallas	Dallas, TX	24.24
14.	Sunrise MCC/Hi Desert	Palmdale, CA	22.38
15.	SisterSpirit	Portland, OR	22.23
16.	Vieux Carre MCC	New Orleans, LA	21.06
17.	MCC of the Disciples	Washington, DC	20.68
18.	All Saints MCC	Atlanta, GA	20.66
19.	MCC Brooklyn	Brooklyn, NY	20.42
20.	New Life MCC	Charlotte, NC	20.29

MCC Huntsville
Receives Grant

MCC Huntsville, Alabama has been awarded a $10,000 grant from the Chicago Resource Center for the further development of Samaritan Family Services, a counseling ministry of the church.

Established a year ago, the center has grown to include a full time counseling and psychotherapy caseload. The counselor on staff, Felicia Fontaine, is licensed by the State of Alabama as a professional counselor. Felicia is also student clergy with the Huntsville Church and once licensed, intends to earn additional certification as a Pastoral Counselor.

Founded with the belief that MCC's ministry of healing must include direct care services where appropriate and feasible, the center seeks to integrate traditional therapeutic practices within a church community setting. Services are provided on a sliding scale basis.

The current caseload for the center is approximately 40 and increases daily. Twenty-five to thirty people are seen for private psychotherapy each week. The grant, combined with client fees will provide a full-time salary for the counselor and a part-time secretary.

As the caseload continues to grow, MCCH will explore additional staff positions, possibly in social work or chemical dependency counseling. They are eager to share information with other churches who might be interested in developing a similar program.

Pastoral Search

Ke Anuenue O Ke Aloha (Rainbow of Love) MCC, Honolulu, Hawaii, has begun searching for a new pastor. The church was organized in May of 1989 and has recently moved to "Commissioned Church" status. While they are currently looking for a half-time pastor, they hope to be able to move to full-time pastor in 18 months to two years. Interested candidates should contact the church Pastoral Search Committee, P.O. Box 6177, Honolulu, Hawaii 96818.

General Conference XV
July 14-21, 1991

A second General Conference mailing is being sent out in February overflowing with detailed information on special events and programs that are planned. Look for this mailing and be sure to make your plans now to attend.

Praises!

Praise God! Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson is one of five women from around the world (the only one from the United States) who has been invited to address the World Council of Churches' women's gathering in Canberra, Australia in February. She has been especially encouraged to speak about being a lesbian Christian. Way to go Nancy! Good luck, our prayers will go with you.

General Council Second Readings For March, 1991

The General Council invites the UFMCC to give their input on how the following policies or procedures might affect them. The motions below have been passed by the General Council as First Readings, and will be submitted for final adoption as Second Readings at the March, 1991 General Council meeting. The executive board or steering committee of a program agency may respond as a whole, or they may authorize the program head to respond on their behalf.

Please submit any written responses to the Clerk of the General Council through the Fellowship Offices by February 28, 1991.

A. XI-A-9 (90.10.PB.09): Moved that the minimum full-time salary required for Pastors of UFMCC Chartered Churches in the U.S. shall be 80% of the local "average annual pay" as defined in "GUIDELINES FOR COMPENSATION OF FULL-TIME UFMCC CLERGY." By February 1, 1992 each District Committee in the U.S. shall submit to the General Council a schedule for implementation of this requirement in the Chartered Churches of their Districts. (See Attachment 2 General Council October, 1990)

B. XI-B-2 (90.10.IC.02): Moved that the "Top 20 Tithes/Top 20 Per Capita" be removed from Keeping In Touch. Rationale: The present process is classist and does not take into consideration global and regional economics or cultural processes. It especially places an emphasis on the importance of money in Denominational and spiritual development that does not do justice to third world regions.

C XI-B-3 (90.10.IC.03): Moved that Australian Samaritan Education be authorized as an independent institution which will work in conjunction with, and be subject to the District of Australia. ASE will maintain collegial relationships with all other Samaritan institutions.

D. XI-D-9 (90.10.CP.09): Move to amend the UFMCC Policy and Procedure Manual, section A.1001 (pages 13-14) to be renumbered A.1100 and to read:

A.1100.a A District Committee has the authority to request the revocation of the Charter of a church in it's district.

A.1100.b The General Council may take action to revoke a Charter based on the following criteria:

1. Non-payment of tithes - when no attempt to pay or arrange a payment plan exceeds a period of 6 months. (See UFMCC By-laws Article X.B)
2. Non-compliance with UFMCC and District By-laws, Policies, Procedures and Standards.

A.1100.c The General Council authorizes the Corporate and Legal Division to issue, revoke, and receive Church Charters only at the request of the District Committee/World Church Extension Board. A list of Chartering actions will be received as an attachment to the next General Council minutes.

A.1100.d A. Charter applications must be received by Corporate and Legal Division at least 60 days prior to the requested date of Chartering.

B. The District Committee and the District Coordinator are responsible for reviewing Local Church By-laws/Standard Operating Procedures/Policies and Procedures, and assuring Corporate Legal (in writing) that the Local Church By-laws/Standard Operating Procedures/Policies and Procedures are in compliance with UFMCC By-laws.

E. XI-D-10 (90.10.CP.10): Moved to amend C.104.a (page 31) to read:

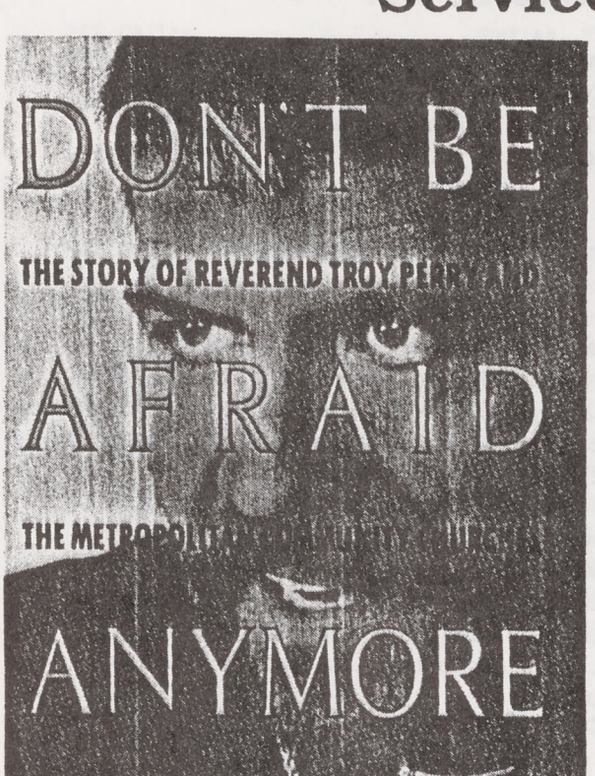
C.104.a Adequate staff and equipment will be present to facilitate General Council meetings. Within fifteen (15) days after a General Council meeting, a draft of minutes will be sent to members of the General Council. This draft is not for distribution beyond the General Council members. General Council members must submit corrections to the draft minutes to Fellowship Offices within forty-five (45) days of the meeting.

F. XI-D-13 (90.10.CP.13): Moved to amend C.104.c (page 31) to read:

C.104.c Approved General Council minutes shall be sent to all UFMCC Clergy Delegates and Lay Delegates, the Official Observer of New Works, UFMCC Programmers, and members of the General Council within sixty (60) days the General Council meeting.

G. XI-F-17 (90.10.BE.17): Moved to accept the policy for the Benevolence Fund, protocol for funerals, and Elders' response to death of Fellowship leaders. (See Attachment 22, General Council October 1990)

New Book Available from Church Services in October!



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Board of Directors Member _____

On December 16, 1990, Christ Chapel MCC, Santa Ana, CA, elected Rev'd Ronald W. Jesser as their new pastor. Ron assumed duties of pastor as of January 15, 1991 and his installation is planned for February 24, 1991 with Rev. Eduard Perry of Tucson, AZ and the Southwest District Coordinator Rev. Don Pederson participating. For further information please contact the church at (714/835-0722). Congratulations to Christ Chapel MCC and to Rev'd Jesser!

Congratulations to Rev. Chuck Larsen of San Francisco, CA who was recently appointed Chaplain to the Lesbian and Gay Police Officers in the City and County of San Francisco. The term of this appointment is for five years and it was reported to Rev. Larsen that there are 240 Gay and Lesbian Officers on the police force. In addition Chuck serves on staff at Golden Gate MCC in San Francisco where Dr. Buddy Truluck is senior pastor.

Prayers!

Remember Rev. Ron Pannell of San Francisco, CA in your prayers as his lover Michael Brumfield recently died of Aids. Michael was a devoted spouse who followed his lover as together they served MCC's in San Francisco, New Orleans, Baltimore, and finally they returned to San Francisco where Ron is currently serving on Staff of Golden Gate MCC and where Michael was serving on the Board of Directors at the time of his death.

Prayers are needed for all our brothers and sisters, friends and family, and loved ones who are in the Middle East. We know of several MCC members who have been sent over, and we need to keep them and their families in our prayers.

Prayers of thanksgiving for the life and example of Warren Bacon, who died of AIDS-related complications on Jan. 5, 1991. Warren, a member of MCC Hartford, CT, served as Board member, deacon, and lay delegate of that church and was also active in the local gay/lesbian community. Please pray for his family, friends and MCC Hartford as they grieve his loss.

GCXV Scholarship Fund

General Conference XV is coming soon! This year will mark the first time that UFMCC has ever offered scholarships to a General Conference. We do need your help in building up the Scholarship Fund so that we can offer as many scholarships as are needed.

Scholarships will be granted to qualified persons in two categories: 1) Person Outside U.S., and 2) Catastrophic Illness. Persons in these categories also have to meet the following criteria: a) Voting Delegate, and b) Economic Hardship.

Application forms can be found in your General Conference Registration packet. Forms sent in are being reviewed by Rev. Elder Troy Perry and Don Eastman and they will make the decision on qualified recipients.

Please help us to build this fund; send your donation to the UFMCC Offices, attn: General Conference XV, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., Ste 304, Los Angeles, CA 90029. All donations will be greatly appreciated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR NEEDED -- MCC Long Beach, CA is accepting interested applicants for the position of Church Business Administrator. Requirements are a BBA or BBM degree or better, and they would prefer a credentialed person. If you are interested please call Rev. Dusty Pruitt at MCC Long Beach (213/432-3641).

FUND RAISING CONCERT -- Marsha Stevens will be having a fundraising Concert on March 2, 1991, 7:00 pm, at Ocean of Life MCC, Costa Mesa, CA. This concert is to promote her new album, which rumor has it is out of this world! Come and show your support, and enjoy a wonderful evening of beautiful music. (No admission fee).

SPANISH BROCHURES -- "Not A Sin, Not A Sickness" is now available in Spanish translation through UFMCC Church Services. "Homosexualidad: Ni Pecado, Ni Enfermedad" may be ordered by the same item number (BR-10) at the same cost; please indicate you wish the Spanish version. (Also available in Spanish is Rev. Steve Pieters "Spiritual Strength for Survival" (BR-09).)

Nat'l Council of Churches Update

The National Council of Churches' General Board approved a continuation of dialogue with UFMCC at its recent meeting in Portland, Oregon. This process will include a series of local and regional meetings between MCC representatives and representatives of various NCC member denominations.

UFMCC first applied to the National Council of Churches for membership back in 1981, but two years later the council voted to postpone action on the application "indefinitely" after several Eastern Orthodox bodies threatened to leave the council if MCC was declared eligible. Membership in the National Council is only to church bodies, but how "church" is defined is a matter of debate among NCC's member denominations.

The question now around UFMCC's application is whether a body formed around a particular issue - in this case, ministry to homosexuals - can be considered a church.

In 1988 the National Council approved a dialogue program with UFMCC, but that process was interrupted by what NCC President Leonid Kishkovsky described as "a period of profound and time-consuming institutional crisis and revision." In May 1990 UFMCC was deeply concerned because council officials had not implemented that process, and asked for clarification of the church's relationship with the council. In Portland, Kishkovsky told General Board members that a parliamentarian review determined that UFMCC would have to file a new application. UFMCC officials have decided not to refile until the diaglogue is complete - which could be another three years.

DPOC Update

The Department of People of Color (DPOC) cosponsored the aids Conference in Orlando, Florida, Jan 18-20, 1991. For the first time at the conference, a concurrent POC and WPHR meeting occurred. Rev. Elder Troy Perry shared his recognition of the dynamics of Racism during his growth experience at the In-House training by White People Healing Racism last year. The Moderator also suggested that DPOC make known information about the ministry.

The DPOC has several available items:

-- DPOC Standard Operating Procedures.....$ 3.00
-- DPOC Conference Brochure.....$ 8.00
-- DPOC History.....$ 3.00
-- A Process Toward Harmony - Litany.....$ 1.00
-- Racism in UFMCC: A Glossary of Terms.....$ 2.00

These items will help to answer the question that some white people continue to lodge: "Why do we need anything for people of color?" This Department's ministry is also the avenue for white people to heal the guilt that all our ancestors have passed down from generation to generation which separates us through color prejudice. This will allow the Department to minister to and with each other in a predominantly white structured world and a predominantly white male led denomination.

Racism is an evil that (including any other "ism") consistently:...is an intentional action against the Gospel of Jesus Christ;...is an attempt to kill the spirit of human beings of color;...is a depravity and draining of the humanity of white people. This denomination claims to be a "church for all peoples" "a church where God does not discriminate"...It is time that we call a halt to inability to be church to all peoples and allow God to help us also not to discrimnate! I need your help.

Please send for copies of this information; contact the persons of color in your church, and designate at least one white person in your church to deal with healing racism. If you have no persons of color in your church and plan no outreach to people of color, please designate at least one white person to deal with healing racism. Begin by sharing this information with the leadership in your church and lay the ground work to begin a program.

If you need more information please contact: Rev. La Paula Turner, DPOC Exec Dir, 5300 Santa Monica Blvd., #304, Los Angeles, CA 90029; (213/464-5100); or Judy Kiser, Chair, Division of WPHR, P.O. Box 10563, Norfolk, VA 23513; (804/855-8626). We are open to invitations to your church of District Conferences to address these issues.

December, 1990
Top 20 Tithes

1.	Church/Holy Spirit MCC	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	$4250.59
2.	MCC Dallas	Dallas, TX	3527.56
3.	MCC San Francisco	San Francisco, CA	3142.10
4.	MCC Toronto	Ontario, CAN	2620.89
5.	MCC of the Resurrection	Houston, TX	2379.46
6.	MCC Washington	Washington, DC	2348.79
7.	MCC San Diego	San Diego, CA	1956.91
8.	First MCC of Kansas	Wichita, KS	1574.19
9.	River City MCC	Sacramento, CA	1394.02
10.	MCC of the Rockies	Denver, CO	1283.75
11.	Agape MCC	Ft. Worth, TX	1087.39
12.	MCC New York	New York, NY	1076.48
13.	MCC Austin	Austin, TX	964.98
14.	MCC New Haven	New Haven, CT	765.96
15.	Holy Covenant MCC	Hinsdale, IL	689.02
16.	MCC San Jose	San Jose, CA	688.97
17.	Christ Chapel MCC	Santa Ana, CA	613.72
18.	MCC San Antonio	San Antonio, TX	602.32
19.	Golden Gate MCC	San Francisco, CA	563.77
20.	Ke Anuenue O Ke Aloha MCC	Honolulu, HI	556.89

December, 1990
Top 20 Per Capita

1.	SisterSpirit	Portland, OR	123.40
2.	Calvary MCC	Redwood City, CA	37.81
3.	MCC of Mt. Vernon	Seattle, WA	27.27
4.	MCC Dallas	Dallas, TX	23.45
5.	MCC Charlottesville	Charlottesville, VA	22.53
6.	MCC New York	New York, NY	22.39
7.	Open Arms MCC	Rochester, NY	22.19
8.	New Life MCC	Berkeley, CA	20.75
9.	MCC of the Disciples	Washington, DC	20.65
10.	MCC of the Gentle Shepherd	Vancouver, WA	20.21
11.	MCC Edmonton	Alberta, CAN	19.53
12.	Ke Anuenue O Ke Aloha MCC	Honolulu, HI	18.75
13.	MCC Hawaii	Honolulu, HI	18.65
14.	Holy Covenant MCC	Hinsdale, IL	18.62
15.	MCC of Northern Virginia	Falls Church, VA	18.49
16.	Christ Chapel MCC	Santa Ana, CA	17.87
17.	Christ the Redeemer MCC	Evanston, IL	17.74
18.	MCC Johnson County	Lenexa, KS	16.01
19.	Golden Gate MCC	San Francisco, CA	15.93
20.	MCC Toronto	Ontario, CAN	15.59